

VZCZCXRO8026

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3255
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

UNCLAS ATHENS 000228

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MAURITANIA: GREECE AGREES "100 PERCENT" WITH U.S.
POSITION

REF: SECSTATE 13962

1. (SBU) DepPolCouns delivered reftel demarche on EU policy toward Mauritania to MFA A9 Africa Directorate deputy head Taxiarchis Christopoulos. Christopoulos said Greek diplomats from Brussels would attend the February 20 EU meeting in Paris. He also said that Mauritania was a regular topic of discussion in the EU and had been discussed as recently as February 18 at the working level.

2. (SBU) Christopoulos said Greece agreed "100 percent" with the U.S. position on Mauritania and stressed the importance of the return of democracy to the African country. He said the coup by General Aziz was a "pity," noting that the democratic Mauritanian government had had good relations with the EU. He explained that General Aziz had engineered the coup when President Abdallahi had fired him from his position. Nevertheless, the African Union had signaled that coups would no longer be tolerated as a means of changing government in Africa, a position Greece and the entire EU supported. Such coups, he argued, not only destabilized the region, they also were a fertile breeding ground for international terrorism.

3. (SBU) On our demarche point that the junta may be engaging in de-stabilizing activities in neighboring Mali, Christopoulos said Greece had similar information and was trying to gather more. He explained that Greece did not have an embassy in Nouakchott and relied on its mission in Rabat for coverage.
SPECKHARD